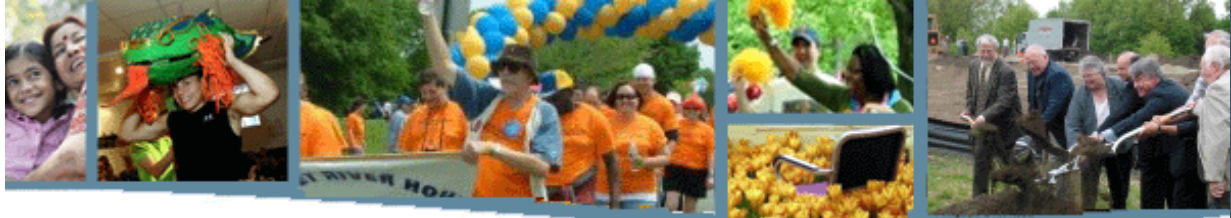


DMH Connections

A publication of the Mass. Department of Mental Health
Employee Newsletter
Office of Communications & Consumer Affairs

April 2009



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Massachusetts Earns High Marks for Mental Health Services System in National Report

Citing expanded mental health parity, the development of consumer-run



National Alliance on Mental Illness

Recovery Learning Communities and the Commonwealth's landmark health care reform, the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) in its report "Grading the States 2009: A Report on America's Health Care System for Adults with Serious Mental Illness" gave Massachusetts a "B" for its mental health care system. According to the report, the national average grade was a "D." Massachusetts was one of only six states to receive a grade of "B." No state received an "A."

"We are very pleased that NAMI recognized the strides that the Department of Mental Health and Massachusetts has made in its public mental health system," said Commissioner Barbara A. Leadholm, M.S., M.B.A. "We share NAMI's goals of having a mental health system that meets the needs of consumers whenever and wherever they need it."

States were graded on 65 criteria in four categories: health promotion and management; financing and core treatment/recovery services; consumer and family empowerment; and community integration and social inclusion.

The Department of Mental Health received the highest possible score in the "Consumer and Family Test Drive," an original research instrument developed by NAMI in 2006 that measures how well people with serious mental illnesses and their family members are able to

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Please contribute to the next edition of DMH Connections

Deadlines for upcoming issues:

April 21st for the May 4th newsletter

May 22nd for the June 1st newsletter

Please send all materials to Sarah Spaeth at sarah.r.spaeth@massmail.state.ma.us

Consumer Art Exhibit to be Displayed at State House

On May 11 at 2 p.m., DMH will host an opening reception at Nurses Hall at the State House for "Recovering Our Dreams: Rehabilitation Through Art," an exhibition of works by artists with psychiatric disabilities working at Vinfen's Gateway Arts and Webster House. The consumer art exhibit will be on display in Doric Hall at the State House from May 11 through May 22. The exhibit, one of the Department's many events scheduled during Mental Health Month, highlights how creative expression becomes a path to recovery for many individuals with mental illnesses.

access essential information about conditions and treatment resources. Other high-scoring areas included: integrating mental health and primary health care; cultural competence; consumer-run programs; promotion of peer-run services; and mental illness public education efforts.

The report acknowledged Massachusetts' proud history of innovation in mental health services. Among these are an expanded parity law that goes into effect in July, adding alcohol and substance use disorders, eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder and autism to private health insurance coverage. DMH also continues its national leadership role in developing alternatives to the use of restraint and seclusion in public and private hospitals.

"The 2009 'Grading the States' report comes during challenging economic times. Although Massachusetts received a terrific grade, we are in a precarious position to sustain our forward momentum—all the more reason why we must be constant in our vision of community first and a consumer-driven and family-centered behavioral health system," said Commissioner Leadholm. "We cannot do this without our partners and stakeholders, including the Legislature, who all deserve to be acknowledged for helping us to better serve adults, children, adolescents and families with serious mental illness."

To view the complete NAMI's "Grading the States 2009: A Report on America's Health Care System for Adults with Serious Mental Illness," [click here](#)

Worcester SH Community Rallies to Restore Historic Trees

At one time the grounds of Worcester State Hospital were noted for its assortment of unusual and beautiful trees, donated by visiting dignitaries from around the world throughout the hospital's history. These ancient trees, however, were not spared from the hard winter that central Massachusetts experienced this year. The Worcester State Hospital grounds were particularly hard hit by a destructive ice storm. [Click here](#) to see ice storm photos at Worcester.

A significant number of these older trees and many younger ones were damaged or destroyed. More than 50 trees were removed completely and another 30 required pruning in an attempt to save them, although the results will only be known this spring.

Reacting to this sad loss and ruin of the natural

Northeast Center for Youth and Families Opens New Home for Children

A DMH Western Mass. Area provider, the Northeast Center for Youth and Families held an open house at the newly constructed home for its Kid Builders residential treatment program. The Kid Builders residence is located in Springfield and serves up to eight children from ages of 8 to 13.

Commissioner Barbara Leadholm was a guest at the open house and offered congratulations from the Department, noting the home-like atmosphere of the new program. She spoke about the importance of early intervention in the lives of struggling children and the need for quality programs with the flexibility to meet an individual's needs. Also on hand were Deputy Commissioner Elaine Hill, Western Mass. Area Director Elizabeth Sullivan and Sixteen Acres Civic Association President Clodovaldo Concepcion.

Mr. and Mrs. Concepcion received high praise from Northeast Center CEO Paul Rilla, who credited the Concepcions with helping to make the program's move to the neighborhood a successful one. "Mr. and Mrs. Concepcion were instrumental in welcoming us into the neighborhood," Rilla said. "As President of the Civic Association, Mr. Concepcion arranged for us to attend a meeting of the Association and address any concerns neighbors may have had before the project got off the ground. Mr. Concepcion was personally very supportive of the project," Rilla said.

Guests at the open house agreed the home was both comfortable and well designed. Many visitors also commented on the pastoral setting of the neighborhood and the opportunities for recreation that the large wooded yard would provide.

beauty surrounding the campus, a number of Worcester State Hospital staff offered to donate a tree to replace those lost. This small but sincere act of generosity and support has bloomed into the Worcester State Hospital Tree Restoration Program.

Everyone can participate in the restoration project and on May 8, the donated trees will be planted—hope springs eternal! Worcester State Hospital COO Tony Riccitelli said that anyone can donate a tree, either individually or with a group. The response so far has been tremendous, Riccitelli said. "We are very grateful for this outpouring and support," he said, "and we hope this program and our efforts to save some of the trees will restore the natural beauty of the grounds, especially as we look towards a new hospital."

Here are a few ways you can donate a tree:

Buy a tree and bring it to the hospital. Call Cathy Samko at 508-368-3428 and the WSH grounds staff will take your tree for planting. Buy a tree at a local nursery and have it held for pick up by our grounds staff. Buy a tree at any nursery and have it delivered to Worcester State Hospital, 305 Belmont St., Worcester, MA 01605; attention Cathy Samko, WHS grounds department. Bring a tree from your own property.

And here are a few suggestions for trees that are acceptable to plant in Worcester: Flowering Dogwood, Eastern Red Bud, Thornless Honeylocust, Ginkgo Biloba, Tulip Tree, Callery Pear, Cherry "Kwanzan," Magnolia, Crab Apple, Red Oak, White Oak, Littleleaf Linden.

Tree donors should be aware of the serious problem that the Worcester area is experiencing with the Asian longhorn beetle, which has destroyed acres of trees in the area. Donated trees should NOT be on the *Host List for Asian Longhorn Beetle*. These are:

Acer: Maple, boxelder
Aesculus: Horsechestnut, buckeye
Betula: Birch
Salix: Willow
Ulmus: Elm
Albizia: Mimosa, silk tree
Fraxinus: Ash
Platanus: London plane tree
Populus: Poplar
Sorbus: European Mountain Ash

"Any tree, small or large, will be truly appreciated," Riccitelli said. Tree donations can be anonymous, but participants' names and the

Voice Award Nomination Deadline Extended

The Writer's Guild of America West recently announced its commitment as a 2009 Voice Awards program partner. In order to be able inform their membership about the Voice Awards and encourage them to participate in the nomination process, the nomination/eligibility deadline has been extended to April 30, 2009.

If you know of a film or television production that will have been released between October 1, 2007, and April 30, 2009, and depicts people with mental health problems in a dignified, respectful, and accurate way, please nominate it for a 2009 Voice Award.

Similarly, if you know of mental health consumers who have led efforts to promote social inclusion, demonstrated that recovery is real and possible, and made a positive impact on their workplaces, communities, and/or schools, please nominate them for a 2009 Consumer Leadership Voice Award.

Additional consideration will be given to nominees who have made a positive impact within special populations such as culturally diverse groups, young adults ages 18 to 25, and those who have worked to prevent suicide. The deadline for mental health consumer nominations is still May 15, 2009.

Nominations are open to anyone, are free, and there is no limit to the number an individual can submit. The Voice Awards will be presented at a gala ceremony in Los Angeles on October 14, 2009. Please visit www.voiceawards.samhsa.gov for more information about the Voice Awards and updates on this exciting event.

DMH Staff Development Announces New

names of donated tree will be added to a plaque to be placed in hospital front lobby.

If a donating a tree is not a possibility, the hospital has set up a fund to purchase trees. Contact Cathy Samko at 508-368-3428 for more information.

SERV as an Inspiration!

This month Melinda Garcia Watson (*pictured below with her daughter MariElena*) shares her experience volunteering through SERV:



I'm a 28-year veteran of DMH/Western Mass. I have worked as a licenser, licensing manager, forensic social worker at Northampton State Hospital, as well as a human rights

officer. Currently I am the privacy/security, medical records coordinator at the DMH Office in Northampton.

I do my SERV opportunity at Four Rivers Charter School in Greenfield, where my daughter, MariElena, is in tenth grade. I'm currently tutoring in the Spanish II class twice a week. Being of Mexican/American heritage and bi-lingual, and having taught in Mexico prior to coming to New England, I thought I might have something to offer the school. As it turns out, it's been a really beneficial "fit."

In Professor Craig McDonnell's classroom at Four Rivers I assist in reading dialogs to help students with pronunciation. I assist with daily project assignments, such as piñata making, or writing children's short stories for a day care center in Greenfield, or assist Craig in monitoring the students' daily work assignments. MariElena and I have taught songs in Spanish to Professor McDonnell's Spanish III class and will be doing this activity again in the coming weeks for the Spanish II classes.

The monthly Four Rivers Charter School Newsletter highlighted a section on the accomplishments of Spanish II students on a day we cooked and prepared Mexican food. After choosing a favorite recipe, I explained to the students where the recipe came from and why it was a favorite. We went over new vocabulary

Microsoft Training Classes

More than 60 new course offerings for Microsoft Office training (Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint, Outlook) have been planned for January to June 2009.

You can search the PACE Course Catalog for specific offerings or you can download a list of all the offerings from the [PACE Library > Resources](#) (keyword search 'computer'). Look for DMH MS Office Offerings Jan-Jun 2009.

Annual Research Presentations Highlight DMH Priorities

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center recently hosted the DMH Research Centers of Excellence Annual Presentations. The Department of Mental Health supports two Research Centers of Excellence, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center Commonwealth Research Center (CRC) and The University of Massachusetts Medical School Center for Mental Health Service Research (CMHSR). DMH works with the Centers to forward its mission of recovery, resiliency



and partnership.
Mary Ellen Foti, MD
(pictured left), Deputy

Commissioner for Clinical and Professional Services, and Commissioner Barbara Leadholm, MS, MBA, were on hand to welcome the presenters and audience.

The presentations focused on ongoing research initiative by the Centers and highlighted efforts to address DMH identified priorities. The topics included: multicultural issues, mental health issues for teenagers and young adults,

for the recipe and the actual preparation of "Miguitas," an old Garcia Trevino family recipe. It was a wonderful learning experience which culminated in a mid-morning feast of my homemade pinto beans, Mexican rice, guacamole, homemade salsa and student-made "Miguitas." What better way to learn a language than to share the actual experience of cooking a meal, which many said they had done over winter break with their families.

Having the opportunity to SERV is both rewarding and fulfilling, as I felt the need to keep my finger on the pulse of education in this case, Four Rivers Charter School, which uses expeditionary learning as their teaching vehicle. When I taught ESL in Mexico City at the Institute for Cultural Relations, prior to coming to New England, I was amazed at how much I learned throughout the teaching experience. It was a truly amazing process which continues to inspire me.

I would encourage any staff who would like to have their life enriched to volunteer their time and energy to SERV, specifically in an area they are passionate about. It's a great experience and opportunity to give something back to your community.

Recipe for "Miguitas"

Garcia Trevino Family of Monterrey, NL, Mexico
breakfast alternative or anytime "comfort food."

Ingredients:
(serves 6 people)

1 Pkg of corn tortillas (12) tear by hand in large pieces (about the size of a half/dollar).

4 Eggs

2 Tbs of canola oil
(or enough to cover the half dollar size of tortillas in the fry pan).

♦ Can of tomato sauce

♦ Cup of Salsa (I use Pace Medium/Hot Sauce)

♦ Cup (or more) of grated Jack Cheese
Salt and pepper to taste



Put sufficient oil in a fry pan to heat. When oil is med/hot place the torn up pieces of tortillas in the oil. Be careful not to place on top of one another, as you want them all to get "crispy"

consumer involvement in research and family intervention in research.

Research conducted on multicultural issues studies the barriers to receive care and strategies to address the barriers in a multicultural context. Dr. Sun S. Kim, PhD, RN, presented her research that attempts to identify personal and sociocultural factors affecting Korean men's smoking behavior in order to find intervention strategies that are receptive and effective. Her research findings concluded that Korean men in the U.S. are more likely to make a serious attempt to quit smoking if they have a perceived social norm against smoking and follow the religious doctrine of Korean Protestantism that strongly discourages smoking. Dr. Kim used her research to develop suggested treatment plans that correspond to her findings.

Research centered on the Transition Age Youth (TAY) population looks at patterns to determine how to predict the onset of a mental illness and how to retain youth in an outpatient treatment. This research is critical since many youth with mental illness have poor functional outcomes such as lower high school graduation rates, higher unemployment rates, increased risk of being homeless and greater risk of being pregnant. The Centers are currently working to design a study of intervention to facilitate treatment retention and further study barriers of treatment retention. On May 11 Beth Israel Deaconess will host a conference called "Youth Mental Health: Needs, Challenges and Opportunities" that will explore the challenges and opportunities this population face.

The Centers have made great strides to include consumer's input in their research. The CMHSR's Consumer Workgroup reviews grants submissions and discusses the consumer involvement in proposed studies as well as ways consumer participation could be increased. CMHSR's Consumer

and light golden color. Once they are golden, add the tomato sauce and the salsa carefully, to cover the tortilla pieces (don't mix too much, as they will get mushy). Break eggs into mixture, allowing the white and yolk of the eggs to cook. Then, carefully mix. Add grated Jack Cheese on top and let sit until the cheese is melted.

Enjoy with your favorite bacon, sausage or chorizo, rice and beans!

"Miguitas"

Receta de La Familia Garcia Trevino de Monterrey, NL, Mexico

Ingredientes:
(para 6 personas)

1 paquete de tortillas de maiz
4 huevos
1/4 taza de aceite canola
1/2 taza de salsa de tomate
1/4 taza de Salsa Pace (o cualquiera otra salsa)
♦ taza de queso Chihuahua (or queso jack)
raillado
sal o pimienta a gusto

En un sartén ponga suficiente aceite para cubrir las tortillas cortadas en pedazos . Caliente el aceite a temperatura med. Ponga los pedazos de tortilla en el aceite hasta que estén tostados (pero no muy). Agregue la salsa de tomate y la salsa Mexicana. Mesclelas bien. Agregue los huevos ya batidos. Al final agregue el queso raillado hasta que este deritido, sal y pimienta.

Cuando se haya deritido el queso comalas con gusto!

Thank you, Melinda! And thanks to all DMH employees who generously give their time and energy to our fellow citizens in need.

Please visit the [SERV website](#) to find a volunteer opportunity.

Exciting Results from Worcester State Hospital Pet Drive

The Worcester State Hospital Patient Open Forum Animal Shelter Pet Drive was a huge success! The patients wish to thank all who so generously donated pet items as well as cash. We received a thank you note from the Animal Shelter for these donations which are very much needed at this time. The patients collected the following:

Dog food: 294 lbs

Advisory Council is comprised of consumers and other stakeholders and is designed to provide input on research that includes developing research questions, evaluating instruments, identifying funding sources and disseminating research findings. The Council will also be working to create a newsletter for consumers by consumers about research findings. The CRC's Consumer Advisory Board helps develop research agenda, provides input on strategies to enhance the quality of research projects, serves as a link between consumers and organizations and addresses the needs of cultural and ethnic minorities.

Family programs are also being researched by the Centers. A pilot study called Family-Directed Cognitive Adaptation (FCA) researched whether clients would show improvement in adaptive living skills and family members would report a decrease in perceived burden of care after completing a program that focused on education, reducing stress and solving problems. The program has 16 weekly individual family sessions that include a feedback session and 2-3 modules targeting specific areas of daily functioning. Nine families completed all sixteen sessions and had overwhelmingly positive feedback. The next step is to apply for a grant to evaluate efficiency of FCA in comparison with a control group.

The Centers are committed to communicating their scientific research findings to the community as part of their Science to Service to Science mission. This means that scientific research should influence clinical services and service providers, and consumers of these services should influence the science. Research, when it is influenced this way, has the best chance of being meaningful to the consumer of services.

To view CMHSR's PowerPoint presentations [click here](#).

Cat food: 141 lbs
Cat litter: 150 lbs
Dog toys: 83
Dog accessories: 4
Dog Bed: 1
Cat toys: 38
Blankets: 37
Towels: 53
Face Cloths: 27
Cash: \$495.00



14th Annual Express Yourself Performance - May 21

The
14th
annual



performance by Express Yourself, sponsored in part by the Citi Performing Arts Center, will be held May 21 at the Wang Theatre at 7 pm. This year's show, "BOUNCE," features the artistic talents of over 100 youth from 14 Department of Mental Health treatment programs as well as youth from 52 underserved communities. Express Yourself brings youth from isolation to collaboration celebrating creativity through music, dance, visual and theater.

The youth will be performing with jazz great Stan Strickland, founder Paula Conrad, visual performance artist Nancy Ostrovsky and STOMP guest Lorraine LeBlanc. West African drummer, Joh Camara, has been working with the Express Yourself group to create an exciting performance piece. In addition, the community a capella group, Swingtown, from St. Johns Prep, will make a special appearance performing in collaboration with the youngest Express Yourself members.

BOUNCE is an explosive celebration with highly charged dance, drumming, a capella singing, art and song. The BOUNCE backdrop is a wildly colorful set design created from the collective

Multicultural Corner: Spring Into Training



As we move into Spring, we head into a busy training season and this holds true for the Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMCA) and its partners. As such, we want to make sure that you are aware of some of the events coming up that relate to multicultural affairs:

Event: "A Sound Mind for a Sound Body: Unlocking the Power to Heal"
Date: April 24, 2009
Time: 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Location: Lawrence High School Auditorium, 95 N. Parish Road, Lawrence
Cost: FREE

The Mayor's Health Task Force of the City of Lawrence holds an annual Health Summit, and this year's theme is the connection between the mind and the body. Speakers will include our own Dr. Ed Wang as well as David Williams, PhD, from Harvard University and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Commission to Build a Healthier America. Featured workshops include "Unnatural Causes-Not Just a Paycheck: A look at the connection between unemployment and health issues in the community;" "Addressing Tobacco: Why should I care?;" "The life of a caregiver: Stress management, positive thinking & overall wellness;" "Beyond breathing: Controlling workplace stressors as part of a comprehensive employee wellness program"; and "Making the Connection, Active Lawrence."

To register, contact Milagro Grullon:
milagrogrullon@cityoflawrence.com

Event: Cambodian New Year
Date: Mid-April, 2009

work of youth at the studio and in various treatment and assessment units in collaboration with professional visual artists. Musical accompaniment by Boston's best musicians and special guests create an amazing performance.

Since 1988, award winning Express Yourself, a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization, has served over 2,000 youth. On stage at the performance will be Department of Mental Health Commissioner Barbara Leadholm., President and CEO of the Citi Center Josiah A. Spaulding and Mass. Cultural Council Director Anita Walker.

Tewksbury Hospital Hosts Second Annual Recovery Event



More than 200 people from Tewksbury hospital and the community at large attended the second annual recovery event hosted by the DMH North

East Area Recovery Team. On January 30, the winter day was brightened by the "Art of Recovery" held at Tewksbury Hospital. Director of Community Services Noreen Melanson warmly welcomed all to the event and encouraged guests to enjoy the activities being offered.

The "Art of Recovery" offered everything from entertainment, including musicians and poets, to an opportunity to purchase art and handmade items by eight area artists as well as the Tewksbury



Arts and Healing Program and the Rehab Art Studio. The crowd was treated to a variety of musical talent, including individual vocalists, a band, a solo by a violinist and a drumming presentation. An additional treat was a performance of the combined musical talents of clients and staff.

A special highlight of the afternoon was the screening of the DMH-produced "Recovery: The

Most of us celebrated New Year on January 1, following the calendar schedule. Many of you also know about "Chinese New Year" (also celebrated in Korea and Vietnam) which took place on January 26. Persian New Year (which coincides with the first day of Spring) just ended, and next up is Cambodian New Year which usually takes place some time in mid-April after the harvest. (This New Year celebration is also taking place in Thailand and other Buddhist countries.) This year the holiday officially falls on April 14, 15 and 16, however, there will be local events before and after those days as well. The New Year celebration is a major festivity in Cambodia, with a three-day celebration that includes religious ceremonies, lavish meals with friends and family, and often vibrant fireworks displays and games.

May is Mental Health Month Events

Metro Suburban Area

May 20 - The Hope Fair - as part of the ongoing Hope Project at Westborough State Hospital - 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. in the DTC (Day Treatment Center) area in the Hennessey Building.

May 21 - The Arlington Children's Mental Health Forum, Robbins Library, Mass Ave in Arlington from 7 - 8:30 p.m.

May 4 thru May 8 - PhotoVoice: Celebrating the photography exhibits from PhotoVoice parent participants with South Shore Mental Health and Wayside Youth and Family Support Network. The Massachusetts State House - An opening reception will be held on Wednesday, May 6 1 - 3 p.m. in Doric Hall

Southeastern Area

April 17 - Speaker at Thayer Academy - Sandy Epstein from TSH will speak, 12:30 P.M. at Thayer Academy in Braintree, MA

Sky's the Limit," a mini-documentary, which was introduced by the film's executive producers, Phyllis Stone, director of clinical social work and admissions; and Marion Re, LICSW, both of the DMH North East Area. The documentary truly captures not only the possibility of recovery, but the reality of recovery as well with each participant in the film sharing his or her own unique recovery story, ideas or philosophy. The powerful film created a lasting memory for all who watched it, helping us realize that recovery is happening every day.



The Bridge of Hope (pictured at left), an actual model of a bridge created by staff and consumers of the Tewksbury Rehab Department, was on display and people were invited

to write on it a special message or thought about recovery, to be shared with all who attended. North East Area Director Susan Wing was on hand to share words of praise for accomplishments and most important, to share her sense of hope for the future--that anything is possible!

While enjoying light and healthy refreshments, participants had an opportunity to experience various art activities including decorating a rock with encouraging words or images related to recovery and/or designing a palette with words of wisdom to hang in a collaborative project.

The "Art of Recovery" celebrated recovery and resiliency, showcased the strength of the human spirit and clearly identified that our lives are enriched by people who inspire us, every single day. The "Art of Recovery" truly is alive and well in the North East Area!

"Recovery is Real" Team Launches Website

The "Recovery Real" Team launched their website for the annual NAMI Walk for the Mind of America. On the website you can register for the walk or make a donation. This month Commissioner Barbara Leadholm and Metro Boston Area Director Cliff Robinson registered to walk. Please consider walking or donating to help us reach our goals of 300walkers and \$10,000 raised. When registering or donating please remember to put "Recovery is Real" as

May 12 - Roberta Guez will be Guest Speaker at Taunton City Council - Educate Taunton City Council on mental health issues AT 6 p.m.

May 21 - Choose Hope - Resilience and Recovery for Families, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at Holiday Inn Taunton sponsored by PIN - Keynote speaker - School Superintendent, Morton Sherman, Ed.D

North East Area

May 15 - Annual Patient Canteen Fundraiser, Bake Sale, Flea Market, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Tewksbury Hospital

May 27 - NEA Annual Community Cookout, The cookout provides the opportunity for those who have an association with the hospital (past or present) to get reacquainted and to reconnect, Noon at Tewksbury Hospital

Western Massachusetts Area

May 5 - Celebrate Children's Mental Health Week, Opportunity to honor those who have worked here for our children; dinner; and speaker David Lovelace, author of, "A Memoir of My Bipolar Family SCATTERSHOT" 6 -9 p.m. at Summit View Banquet House in Holyoke, MA

To see all events for May is Mental Health Month please [click here](#).

Articles of Interest

[2 Million US Teens Suffer From Depression](#), WCVB-TV

[Depression Risk Rises For Multiples' Mothers](#), WCVB-TV

[Child suicides - Recent suicides put spotlight on preventing tragedies; Legislators and experts push for new interventions](#) by Lisa Black and Bonnie Miller Rubin, Chicago Tribune

[Backed into a treatment corner](#) by Claudia Gold (Op-Ed), Boston Globe

your team name. [Click here](#) to visit the website.

With 54 days to go the "Recovery is Real" Team has raised \$4,317.00 and recruited 88 walkers.



On March 18 members of the "Recovery is Real" team attended the NAMI kick-off luncheon

(pictured left) at Lombardo's Restaurant in Randolph. You can view NAMI's fundraising tips on their website. <http://www.namimass.org/>

During the month of May the "Recovery is Real" team will be hosting a series of ice cream fundraisers. The dates and locations are listed below. Stay tuned for more details in the May newsletter.

May 7 - 2 - 4 p.m. in the Turville Conference Room @ the Shattuck

May 8 - 12 - 2 p.m. Cambridge/Somerville

May 15 - 1 - 3 p.m. Mezzanine Caf   @ the Lindemann

May 21 - 12:30 - 2:30 p.m. Patio @ the Fuller

Clinicians Corner: Safer Prescribing Practices in Boston from Interagency and Public-Private Collaboration

A collaborative project of the DMH Metro Boston Area and the Metro Boston Area Department of Children and Families (DCF) has been launched to address issues related to prescribing

practices in the DCF population. Karl Petersen, DMH's former Director of Child and Adolescent Services for the Metro Boston Area, convened a group of several Boston area child psychiatrists to respond to concerns about the use of psychotropic medications by children in their



[Depression Tests Urged for Teenagers](#) by Associated Press, New York Times

[Film Festival Aims to De-Stigmatize Mental Illness](#) by Sacha Pfeiffer, WBUR

[Study Links Depression to Thinning of Brain's Cortex](#) by Roni Caryn Rabin, New York Times

[Military puts focus on epidemic of suicides](#) by Alan Gomez, USA Today

[Mass. ranks 8th-best overall dealing with homeless kids](#) by Abby Jordan, MetroWest Daily News

[Army families learn suicide prevention](#) by Kristin M. Hall, AP/Boston Globe



We will be posting **DMH Connections** on DMH's intranet site

care. Started in one DCF Area, the clinical work group has been well received and will expand to the remaining DCF offices in April and May. The child psychiatrists are all DMH providers who have voluntarily devoted time and thought into developing the ongoing Project which will be jointly funded by DMH and DCF.

In recent years, there has been increasing concern about the use and possible overuse of psychotropic medications in children, particularly young children (defined for the purposes of this project as age 10 or younger). Over a 12-month period, the new Work Group will: 1) develop, pilot and evaluate a case-based curriculum designed to increase the capacity of DCF caseworkers to identify problematic psychotropic prescribing practices among children who are involved with the DCF; and 2) develop, pilot and evaluate a model consultation program designed to increase access among DCF caseworkers to expert psychiatric consultation.

The group was convened in October 2008 and held information-gathering focus-group discussions with DCF caseworkers in the four area offices in the Metro Boston DCF Region. Data from the focus groups are being analyzed and three cases with accompanying curriculum material will be developed that reflect the expressed needs of caseworkers.

Curriculum is being prepared for caseworker trainings. Surveys will be developed to assess the effectiveness of the curriculum in: 1) improving knowledge among caseworkers about the standard of care for psychotropic prescribing for young children; 2) improving beliefs among caseworkers about their role in identifying problematic prescribing practices among young children; and 3) improving self-efficacy among caseworkers in identifying problematic prescribing practices among young children. Concurrently, development of the child psychiatry consultation program is taking place. This program will be implemented in the DCF offices in May and June. The program will include incorporation of national clinical practice guidelines as the basis for consultative advice; mock case analysis; procedures for making and accepting consultation referrals; legal review of consultative contracts; and administrative procedures for the panel's deliberations and reporting guidelines.

After the pilot phase of the project has concluded, all project data will be analyzed and a report will be prepared which will include recommendations for further implementation and/or study, as well as for program sustainability.

Conferences and Events

February - April **[Suicide Prevention Training](#)** register online

April 24 **Embracing Each Other Through Community, Wellness, Creativity and Art** 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Vinfen Training Center 35 Medford Street, Somerville; For more information please contact David Webster: 857-364-4949

May 6 **Photo Voice State House Reception** 1 to 3 p.m. Doric Hall; questions please email yolanda.ortiz@waysideyouth.org

May 11 **Youth Mental Health: Needs, Challenges and Opportunities** 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. at the Sherman Auditorium
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center-East Campus, No Fee

May 21 **[Mindfulness Strategies for Mental Health Professionals & their Emotionally Dysregulated Clients](#)** 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Marlborough, MA

June 10 **2009 Youth at Risk Conference** 7:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Endicott College, Beverly; Registration will begin in late April/May 2009

June 22 - August 28 **[26th Annual Cape Cod Summer Symposia](#)**

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